



**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

8320-01

**Notice of Funding Availability Under Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program**

**AGENCY:** Department of Veterans Affairs.

**ACTION:** Notice of Fund Availability.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is announcing the availability of funds for supportive services grants for new applicants and existing grantees under the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program. This Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA) contains information concerning the SSVF Program, supportive services grant application process. Awards made for supportive services grants will fund operations beginning October 1, 2019.

**DATES:** Applications for supportive services grants under the SSVF Program must be received by the SSVF Program Office by 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time on February 22, 2019. In the interest of fairness to all competing applicants, this deadline is firm as to date and hour, and VA will treat as ineligible for consideration any application that is received after the deadline. Applicants should take this practice into account and make early submission of their materials to avoid any risk of loss of eligibility brought about by unanticipated delays, computer service outages, or other submission-related problems.

**ADDRESSES:** For a Copy of the Application Package: Copies of the application can be downloaded from the SSVF Web site at [www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp). Questions

should be referred to the SSVF Program Office via email at [SSVF@va.gov](mailto:SSVF@va.gov). For detailed SSVF Program information and requirements, see part 62 of Title 38, Code of Federal Regulations (38 CFR part 62).

Submission of Application Package:

Applicants must submit applications electronically following instructions found at [www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp). Applications may not be mailed or sent by facsimile (FAX). Applications must be received in the SSVF Program Office by 4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on the application deadline date. Applications must arrive as a complete package. Materials arriving separately will not be included in the application package for consideration and may result in the application being rejected. See Award Information section of this NOFA for maximum allowable grant amounts.

Technical Assistance:

Information regarding how to obtain technical assistance with the preparation of a supportive services grant application is available on the SSVF Program Web site at: [www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. John Kuhn, National Director, Supportive Services for Veteran Families, by email at [SSVF@va.gov](mailto:SSVF@va.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

Funding Opportunity Title: Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: VA-SSVF-110918

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 64.033, VA Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program.

### Funding Opportunity Description

#### Purpose:

The SSVF Program purpose is to provide supportive services grants to private non-profit organizations and consumer cooperatives, who will coordinate or provide supportive services to very low-income veteran families who: (i) are residing in permanent housing and are at risk of becoming homeless; (ii) are homeless and scheduled to become residents of permanent housing within a specified time period; or (iii) after exiting permanent housing within a specified time period, are seeking other housing that is responsive to such very low-income veteran family's needs and preferences. SSVF prioritizes the delivery of rapid re-housing services to homeless veteran households.

Rapid re-housing is an intervention designed to help individuals and families quickly exit homelessness, return to housing in the community, and avoid homelessness again in the near term. The core components of a rapid re-housing program are housing identification, financial assistance with move-in and rental expenses, and rapid re-housing case management and services. These core components represent the minimum that a program must be providing to households to be considered a rapid re-housing program, but do not provide guidance for what constitutes an effective rapid re-housing program. Applicants should familiarize

themselves with the Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks and Program Standards found on at [www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp).

#### Funding Priorities:

The principle goal for this NOFA is to provide support to those applicants who demonstrate the greatest capacity to end homelessness among veterans or, in communities that have already met US Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) Federal Criteria and Benchmarks, or, alternatively, Community Solutions' Functional Zero (the latter can be found at [https://cmtysolutions.org/sites/default/files/final\\_zero\\_2016\\_metrics.pdf](https://cmtysolutions.org/sites/default/files/final_zero_2016_metrics.pdf)), a capacity to sustain these gains. Priority will be given to grantees who can demonstrate adoption of evidence-based practices in their application.

Under Priority 1, VA will provide funding to existing grantees with 3-year accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) in Employment and Community Services: Rapid Rehousing and Homeless Prevention standards, a 4-year accreditation from the Council on Accreditation's (COA) accreditation in Housing Stabilization and Community Living Services standards, or a 3-year accreditation in The Joint Commission's (JC) Behavioral Health Care: Housing Support Services Standards. Priority 2 includes existing grantees seeking to renew their grants not included under Priority 1. Under Priority 3, VA will provide non-renewable grants for a 2-year period to eligible entities providing services to very low-income veteran families who are occupying permanent housing in the areas of one of the Continuums of Care (CoC) listed in the Award Information section of this Notice. VA has designed this 2-year effort to provide a surge of resources in communities with high need. Only existing grantees currently providing services in an identified target

community are eligible to apply for additional funds in that target community they currently serve under Priority 3. Priority 4 is open to new applicants only, who are seeking to provide services in the areas of one of the CoCs listed in the Award Information section of this Notice. These locations have been selected based on the current unmet service needs and the levels of Veteran homelessness, and VA also seeks to ensure that supportive services grants are equitably distributed across geographic regions, including rural communities and tribal lands. Applications for Priority 3 and 4 awards must include a letter of support from the target CoC to be considered for funding. CoC letters of support must contain the information described in the Award Information section of this Notice.

NOTE: VA is considering adding an additional rental subsidy option for Priority 3 awards. Should VA announce this new rental subsidy option through the publication of rulemaking that would amend 38 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 62, Priority 3 awardees, as well as any other SSVF grantee providing services in a Priority 3 target community, would have the Definitions:

Title 38 CFR part 62 contains definitions of terms used in the SSVF Program. In addition to the definitions and requirements described in 38 CFR part 62, this NOFA provides further clarification in this paragraph on the use of *Emergency Housing Assistance* (EHA). EHA may be provided by the SSVF grantee under 38 CFR 62.34(f) to offer transition in place when a permanent housing voucher, such as is offered through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Section 8 program, is available from any source, but access to the permanent housing voucher is pending completion of the housing inspection and administrative processes necessary for leasing. In such circumstances, the EHA payment cannot exceed what would otherwise

be paid when the voucher is utilized. EHA may also be used as part of a Rapid Resolution or diversion response that helps Veteran households avoid entry into homelessness through placements with family or friends.

Approach:

Respondents to this NOFA should base their proposals and applications on the current requirements of Part 62. Grantees will be expected to leverage supportive services grant funds to enhance the housing stability of very low-income veteran families who are occupying permanent housing. In doing so, grantees are required to establish relationships with local community resources. Therefore, grantees must work through coordinated partnerships built either through formal agreements or the informal working relationships commonly found among successful social service providers.

As part of the application, all applicants are strongly encouraged to provide letters of support from their respective VA Network Homeless Coordinator (or their designee). In addition, Priority 1 and 2 applicants are strongly encouraged to provide letters of support from the CoC where they plan to deliver services that reflect the applicant's engagement in the CoC's efforts to coordinate services. Priority 3 and 4 applicants are required to provide these letters from the local CoC. Failure to provide a letter of support from the CoC as described will limit the maximum award to 90 percent of the award made in the previous fiscal year for Priority 1 and 2 applicants (as described in the Award Information section of this Notice. In addition, any applicant proposing to serve an Indian Tribal area is strongly encouraged to provide a letter of support from the relevant Indian Tribal Government.

The CoC's letter of support should note if the applicant is providing assistance to CoC in building local capacity to build Coordinated Entry Systems (CES) and the value

and form of that assistance, whether support is direct funding or staffing. CES requires that providers "operating within the CoC's geographic area must also work together to ensure the CoC's coordinated entry process allows for coordinated screening, assessment and referrals." (HUD Notice: CPD-17-01). The CoC's letter of support should also describe the applicant's participation in the CoC's community planning efforts.

Pursuant to 38 CFR 62.36, all grantees must participate in the development, implementation, and ongoing operations of their local CoC's coordinated assessment system, to include a CoC plan. A CoC plan is a community plan to organize and deliver housing and services to meet the needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing and maximize self-sufficiency. The community plan includes action steps to end homelessness and prevent a return to homelessness (CoC locations and contact information can be found at [www.hudhre.nfo/index.cfm?do=viewCocMaps](http://www.hudhre.nfo/index.cfm?do=viewCocMaps)).

As part of their application, the applying organization's Executive Director must certify on behalf of the agency that they will actively participate in CoC community planning efforts and operate the rapid re-housing component of their SSVF grant in a manner consistent with the Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks and Program Standards found at [www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp).

The aim of the provision of supportive services is to assist very low-income veteran families residing in permanent housing to remain stably housed and to rapidly transition those not currently in permanent housing to stable housing. SSVF emphasizes the placement of homeless veteran families who are described in 38 CFR 62.11(b)-(c) to include (i) very low-income veteran families who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and are scheduled to become residents of permanent

housing within 90 days, and (ii) very low-income veteran families who have exited permanent housing within the previous 90 days to seek other housing that is responsive to their needs and preferences. As a crisis intervention program, the SSVF Program is not intended to provide long-term support for participants, nor will it be able to address all of the financial and supportive services needs of participants that affect housing stability. Rather, when participants require long-term support, grantees should focus on connecting such participants to income supports, such as employment and mainstream Federal and community resources (e.g., HUD-VA Supportive Housing Program, HUD Housing Choice Voucher Programs, McKinney-Vento Funded Supportive Housing Programs, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Social Security Income/Social Security Disability Insurance (SSI/SSDI), etc.) that can provide ongoing support as required.

Assistance in obtaining or retaining permanent housing is a fundamental goal of the SSVF Program. Grantees must provide case management services in accordance with 38 CFR 62.31. Such case management should include tenant counseling, mediation with landlords, and outreach to landlords.

Authority:

Funding available under this NOFA is authorized by 38 United States Code (U.S.C.) 2044. VA implements the SSVF Program through regulations in 38 CFR Part 62. Funds made available under this NOFA are subject to the requirements of these regulations.

#### Requirements for the Use of Supportive Services Grant Funds:

Requirements:



The applicant's request for funding must be consistent with the limitations and uses of supportive services grant funds set forth in 38 CFR part 62 and in this NOFA. In accordance with the regulations and this NOFA, the following requirements apply to supportive services grants awarded under this NOFA:

1. Grantees may use a maximum of 10 percent of supportive services grant funds for administrative costs identified in 38 CFR 62.70(e).

2. Priority 1 and 2 grantees must use a minimum of 60 percent of the temporary financial assistance portion of their supportive services grant funds to serve very low-income veteran families who qualify under 38 CFR 62.11(b). Priority 3 and 4 applicants are required to spend no less than 70 percent of all budgeted temporary financial assistance on participants occupying permanent housing as defined in 38 CFR 62.11(b). (NOTE: Grantees may request a waiver to decrease this minimum, as discussed in the Application Review Information section of this Notice.)

3. Priority 1, 2, and 4 grantees may use a maximum of 50 percent of supportive services grant funds to provide the supportive service of temporary financial assistance paid directly to a third party on behalf of a participant for child care, emergency housing assistance, transportation, rental assistance, utility-fee payment assistance, security deposits, utility deposits, moving costs, and general housing stability assistance (which includes emergency supplies), in accordance with 38 CFR 62.33 and 38 CFR 62.34. Priority 3 grantees must use a minimum of 60 percent of supportive services grant funds to provide the supportive service of temporary financial assistance, unless a waiver is granted by the SSVF program office.

Guidance for the Use of Supportive Services Grant Funds:

Title 38 CFR 62.2 defines Rapid re-housing as assistance offered “without preconditions”. This is consistent with VA policy to support a “Housing First” model in addressing and ending homelessness.

Grantees must develop plans that will ensure that veteran participants have the level of income and economic stability needed to remain in permanent housing after the conclusion of the SSVF intervention. Both employment and benefits assistance from VA and non-VA sources represent a significant underutilized source of income stability for homeless veterans. Income is not a pre-condition for housing. Case management should include income maximization strategies to ensure households have access to benefits, employment, and financial counseling. The complexity of program rules and the stigma some associate with entitlement programs contributes to their lack of use. For this reason, grantees are encouraged to consider strategies that can lead to prompt and successful access to employment and benefits that are essential to retaining housing.

1. Grantees are expected to offer the following supportive services: counseling participants about housing; assisting participants in understanding leases; securing utilities; making moving arrangements; providing representative payee services concerning rent and utilities when needed; and mediation and outreach to property owners related to locating or retaining housing. Grantees may also assist participants by providing rental assistance, security or utility deposits, moving costs, emergency housing, or general housing stability assistance; or using other Federal resources, such as HUD’s Emergency Solutions Grants Program (ESG), or supportive services grant funds subject to the limitations described in this Notice and 38 CFR 62.34.

2. As SSVF is a short-term crisis intervention, grantees must develop plans that will produce sufficient income to sustain veteran participants in permanent housing after the conclusion of the SSVF intervention. Grantees must ensure the availability of employment and vocational services either through the direct provision of these services or their availability through formal or informal service agreements. Agreements with Homeless Veteran Reintegration Programs funded by the U.S. Department of Labor are strongly encouraged. For participants unable to work due to disability, income must be established through available benefits programs.

3. Per 38 CFR 62.33, grantees must assist participants in obtaining public benefits. Grantees must screen all participants for eligibility for a broad range of entitlements such as TANF, Social Security, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, the Earned Income Tax Credit, and local General Assistance programs. A description of some of these benefits programs, including eligibility and how to access benefits, can be found at [www.benefits.gov](http://www.benefits.gov). Grantees are expected to access the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) program directly by training staff and providing the service or subcontracting services to an organization to provide SOAR services.

4. Grantees are encouraged to provide, or assist participants in obtaining, legal services relevant to issues that interfere with the participants' ability to obtain or retain permanent housing. (NOTE: Information regarding legal services provided may be protected from being released to the grantee or VA under attorney-client privilege, although the grantee must provide sufficient information to demonstrate the frequency and type of service delivered.) Support for legal services can include paying for court

filing fees to assist a participant with issues that interfere with the participant's ability to obtain or retain permanent housing or supportive services, including issues that affect the participant's employability and financial security. Grantees (in addition to employees and members of grantees) may represent participants before VA with respect to a claim for VA benefits, but only if they are recognized for that purpose pursuant to 38 U.S.C. Chapter 59. Further, the individual providing such representation must be accredited pursuant to 38 U.S.C. Chapter 59.

5. Access to mental health and addiction services are required by SSVF; however, grantees cannot fund these services directly through the SSVF grant. Therefore, applicants must demonstrate, through either formal or informal agreements, their ability to promote rapid access to and engagement with mental health and addiction services for the veteran and family members.

6. VA recognizes that extremely low-income veterans, with incomes below 30 percent of the area median income, face greater barriers to permanent housing placement. Grantees should consider how they can support these participants.

7. When serving participants who are residing in permanent housing, the defining question to ask is "Would this individual or family be homeless but for this assistance?" The grantee must use VA's homeless prevention screening tool with criteria that targets those most at-risk of homelessness. To qualify for SSVF services, a participant who is served under 38 CFR 62.11(a) (homeless prevention) must not have sufficient resources or support networks (e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks) immediately available to prevent them from becoming homeless. To further qualify for services under 38 CFR 62.11(a), the grantee must document that the

participant meets that eligibility requirement. Documentation of one of the following conditions would meet this requirement:

(a) Has moved because of economic reasons two or more times during the 60 days immediately preceding the application for homelessness prevention assistance;

(b) Is living in the home of another because of economic hardship;

(c) Has been notified in writing that their right to occupy their current housing or living situation will be terminated within 21 days after the date of application for assistance;

(d) Lives in a hotel or motel, and the cost of the hotel or motel stay is not paid by charitable organizations or by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals;

(e) Is exiting a publicly funded institution or system of care (such as a health care facility, a mental health facility, or correctional institution) without a stable housing plan; or

(f) Otherwise lives in housing that has characteristics associated with instability and an increased risk of homelessness, as identified in the VA's homeless prevention screening tool.

8. SSVF grantees are required to participate in local planning efforts designed to end veteran homelessness. Grantees may use grant funds to support SSVF involvement in such community planning by sub-contracting with CoCs, when such funding is essential, to create or sustain the development of these data driven plans. Grantees may also deploy staff to participate in CoC sanctioned Coordinated Entry screening and assessment.

9. When other funds from community resources are not readily available to assist program participants, grantees may choose to utilize supportive services grants, to the extent described in this NOFA and in 38 CFR 62.33 and 62.34, to provide temporary financial assistance. Such assistance may, subject to the limitations in this NOFA and 38 CFR part 62, be paid directly to a third party on behalf of a participant for child care, transportation, family emergency housing assistance, rental assistance, utility-fee payment assistance, security or utility deposits, moving costs and general housing stability assistance as necessary.

10. SSVF expects grantees to offer Rapid Resolution (also known as diversion) services. These services engage veterans immediately before or after they become homeless and assist them to avoid continued homelessness. These efforts can reduce the trauma and expense associated with extended periods of homelessness, and the strain on the crisis response and affordable housing resources in the community. Through Rapid Resolution, the grantee and the Veteran explore safe, alternative housing options immediately before or quickly after they become homeless. Rapid Resolution can identify an immediate safe place to stay within the Veteran's network of family, friends, or other social networks. All Veterans requesting SSVF services should have a Rapid Resolution screening and if not appropriate for Rapid Resolution grantees should then assess the Veteran for other SSVF services. More information about Rapid Resolution can be found at [www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp).

#### Award Information

Overview:

This NOFA announces the availability of funds for supportive services grants under the SSVF Program and pertains to proposals for renewal of existing supportive services grant programs.

#### Funding:

The funding priorities for this NOFA are as follows:.

1. Priority 1. Under Priority 1, VA will provide funding to those existing grantees with 3-year CARF, 4-year COA accreditations, or 3-year JC accreditations. Proof of accreditation must be submitted with the application no later than the application due date. Grantees previously awarded a 3-year grant that is not scheduled to end by October 1, 2019, cannot apply under this NOFA but are required to submit a letter of intent (LOI) by the NOFA deadline indicating their intention of continuing SSVF services in FY 2019. Grantees submitting a LOI must include proof of continued accreditation, a letter of support from the CoC (see Award Information section in this Notice.) and a proposed budget for FY 2020.

2. Priority 2. Priority 2 includes all other existing grantees, not applying under Priority 1, seeking to renew their grants.

3. Priority 3. Priority 3 applications will be accepted only from existing grantees currently providing services in one of the communities targeted for additional funding under this Priority.

a) Awards are for a 2-year non-recurring period.

b) If multiple grantees have fundable scores, VA may elect to equally distribute funds amongst applicants regardless of the funding request in order to

strengthen overall community capacity. This distribution of funds could occur among the top 2 or 3 scoring applicants.

- c) If underspent, awards are subject to being recouped as per the Other Information
- d) section of this Notice, with funding amounts annualized for the purposes of spending calculations (for example, a 2-year award of \$6 million is treated as \$3 million per year). As a new award in the first year of the award period, grants will not be subject to the Other Information section of this Notice until the end of the third quarter.
- e) List of CoCs for purposes of Priority 3 funding.

<b>State</b>	<b>CoC for the following areas</b>	<b>CoC ID</b>	<b>Maximum (awards cover 2-year term)</b>
CA	San Jose/Santa Clara	CA-500	\$3 million
CA	San Francisco	CA-501	\$6 million
CA	Oakland	CA-502	\$6 million
CA	Los Angeles	CA-600	\$6 million
CA	San Diego	CA-601	\$6 million
DC	District of Columbia	DC-500	\$3 million
HI	Honolulu	HI-501	\$3 million
IL	Chicago	IL-510	\$6 million
NY	New York City	NY-600	\$6 million
WA	Seattle	WA-500	\$6 million

4. Priority 4. Priority 4 applications will be accepted from new applicants only, who are seeking to provide services in the areas of one of the following targeted CoCs:



- a) Grant requests do not need to serve target communities exclusively and may also include neighboring communities. Grant requests cannot exceed the amount listed as the “Maximum Request” for the target CoCs listed below.
- b) As a new award, in the first year of the award period, grants will not be subject to VII.C until the end of the third quarter.

<b>State</b>	<b>CoC for the following areas</b>	<b>CoC ID</b>	<b>Maximum Request</b>
AK	Alaska BoS	AK-501	\$500,000
AL	Birmingham/Jefferson, St. Clair	AL-500	\$500,000
AR	Little Rock/Central Arkansas	AR-500	\$500,000
AZ	Phoenix, Mesa/Maricopa	AZ-502	\$1 million
CA	Sacramento City	CA-503	\$1 million
CA	San Diego	CA-601	\$1 million
CA	Santa Ana/Anaheim/Orange County	CA-602	\$1 million
CO	Metropolitan Denver	CO-503	\$1 million
CO	Colorado BoS	CO-500	\$1 million
IN	Indiana BoS	IN-502	\$1 million
KS	Kansas BoS	KS-507	\$500,000
LA	Lafayette/Acadiana	LA-500	\$250,000
LA	Louisiana BoS	LA-509	\$250,000
MA	Boston	MA-500	\$1 million
MO	Kansas City	MO-604	\$500,000
MT	Montana Statewide	MT-500	\$500,000
NC	Charlotte/Mecklenberg	NC-505	\$500,000
NC	North Carolina BoS	NC-503	\$500,000
NY	Buffalo, Niagara Falls/Erie	NY-508	\$250,000
NV	Las Vegas/Clark	NV-500	\$1 million
OR	Portland, Gresham/Multnomah	OR-501	\$1 million
OR	Oregon BoS	OR-505	\$1 million
SD	South Dakota Statewide	SD-500	\$500,000
TX	Dallas City	TX-600	\$500,000
TX	Houston, Pasadena, Conroe/Harris	TX-700	\$1 million
TX	Texas BoS	TX-503	\$1 million
WA	Washington BoS	WA-501	\$1 million
WI	Wisconsin BoS	WI-500	\$1 million

All Priority 1 and 2 applicants must apply using the renewal application. To be eligible for renewal of a supportive services grant, the Priority 1 and 2 applicants' program concept must be substantially the same as the program concept of the grantees' current grant award. Renewal applications can request funding that is equal to or less than their current annualized award. Under Priority 3 and 4, applicants must apply using the application for new applicants. Applications will only be accepted from eligible entities proposing to serve the target communities served by one of the CoCs described in Section II.B.3. and II.B.4.

#### Allocation of Funds:

Funding will be awarded under this NOFA to new applicants and existing grantees for a 1 to 3-year period for services beginning October 1, 2019. The following requirements apply to grants awarded under this NOFA:

1. In response to this NOFA, only existing grantees can apply as Priority 1 or 2 grantees.
2. Applications for Priority 3 will only be accepted from designated target communities and requests cannot exceed the amounts listed as a maximum award list in the chart in II.B.3.
3. Only existing grantees currently providing SSVF services in a target community listed in II.B.3. may apply for funding under Priority 3. These applicants can only apply for funding in the target community where they are providing services.
4. Applications for Priority 4 must include services for the designated target communities (the application may also include services for adjacent areas) and requests cannot exceed the amounts listed as the maximum award in the chart in II.B.4.

5. Eligible entities can submit no more than one application for new funding under Priority 4.

6. Each renewal grant request under Priority 1 or 2 cannot exceed the grantee's current annualized award.

7. Applicants must fill out separate applications for each grant funding request.

8. Applicants under Priority 1 or 2 may request an amount less than their current award (this will not be considered a substantial change to the program concept).

9. If a grantee failed to use all of its awarded funds in FY 2018 or had unspent funds returned to VA in FY 2018, VA may elect to limit renewal awards under Priority 1 or 2 to the amount of funds used in the previous fiscal year.

10. If, during the course of the grant year, VA determines that grantee spending is not meeting the minimum percentage milestones below, VA may elect to recoup projected unused funds and reprogram such funds to provide supportive services in areas with higher need. Should VA elect to recoup unspent funds, reductions in available grant funds would take place the first business day following the end of the quarter.

(a) By the end of the first quarter, December 31, 2019, of the grantee's supportive services annualized grant award period, if the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds is fewer than 15 percent of the total supportive services grant award VA may recoup funds. During this same period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds may not exceed 35 percent of the total supportive services grant award, or VA may recoup funds.

(b) By the end of the second quarter, March 31, 2020, of the grantee's supportive services annualized grant award period, if the grantee's cumulative requests for

supportive services grant funds is fewer than 40 percent of total supportive services grant award the VA may recoup funds. During this same period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds may not exceed 60 percent of the total supportive services grant award.

(c) By the end of the third quarter, June 30, 2020, of the grantee's supportive services annualized grant award period, if the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds is fewer than 65 percent of total supportive services grant award, the VA may recoup funds. During this same period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds may not exceed 80 percent of the total supportive services grant award, or the VA may recoup funds.

11. Applicants for Priority 1 or 2 awards who fail to provide a letter of support from at least one of the CoCs they plan to serve will be eligible for renewal funding at a level no greater than 90 percent of the amount of funds awarded to them in their prior grant award. Applicants are responsible for determining who in each CoC is authorized to provide such letters of support. This requirement applies to all Priority 1 and 2 applicants, including existing multi-year grantees that are only required to submit a LOI in response to this NOFA. Applicants for Priority 3 or 4 awards are required to provide a letter of support from the CoC identified in Section II.B.3 (for Priority 3) or Section II.B.4. (for Priority 4). Priority 3 and 4 applications that do not include a letter will not be considered for funding. In order to meet this requirement, all applicant letters, regardless of Priority, must include:

(a) A detailed description of the applicant's participation in the CoC's Coordinated Entry process or planning activities and overall community planning efforts (for instance, confirmation of applicant's active participation in planning coordinated entry,

commitment to participating in coordinated entry, hours spent on CoC-sponsored committee or workgroup assignments and names of said committees or workgroups).

(b) The applicant's contribution to the CoC's coordinated entry process capacity building efforts, detailing the specific nature of this contribution (for instance, the hours of staff time and/or the amount of funding provided), if such SSVF capacity has been requested by the CoC or otherwise has shown to be of value to the CoC.

12. Should additional funding become available over the course of grant term from funds recouped under the Award Information section of this Notice, funds that are voluntarily returned by grantees, or funds that become available due to a grant termination, VA may elect to offer these funds to grantees in areas where demand has exceeded available SSVF resources. Additional funds will be provided first to the highest scoring grantee in the selected area who is in compliance with their grant agreement and has the capacity to utilize the additional funds.

13. Should sufficient funds be available, Priority 1 and 2 grantees may be eligible for an increase of up to 2 percent of their renewed total award. Any such increase will be applied uniformly to all renewed Priority 1 and 2 grants.

#### Supportive Services Grant Award Period:

Priority 1 and 2 grant awards are generally made for a 1-year period, although selected grants may be eligible for a 3-year award (see the Award Administration section of this Notice). Priority 3 grants will have a 2-year, non-renewable term. Priority 4 grants are awarded for a 1-year period. Priority 1, 2, and 4 are eligible to be renewed in a subsequent NOFA subject to the availability of funding.

### Eligibility Information

#### Eligible Applicants:

Only eligible entities that are existing grantees with grants scheduled to end by September 30, 2019, can apply under Priority 1 or 2 in response to this NOFA. For Priority 3, any eligible entity that is an existing grantee may apply for new funding in one of the listed target communities described in the Award Information section of this Notice. For Priority 4, any eligible entity may apply for new funding in one of the listed target communities described in the Award Section of this Notice. In order to be eligible, an applicant must qualify as a private non-profit organization that meets the definition of “eligible entity” in the 38 CFR 62.2.

Cost Sharing or Matching: None.

### Application and Submission Information

#### Obtaining an Application Package:

Applications are located at [www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp). Any questions regarding this process should be referred to the SSVF Program Office via email at [SSVF@va.gov](mailto:SSVF@va.gov). For detailed SSVF Program information and requirements, see 38 CFR part 62.

#### Content and Form of Application:

Applicants must submit applications electronically following instructions found at [www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp). The full, downloadable content of the application can be found at [www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp). Priority 3 and 4 applicants must complete the

application for new applicants. Priority 1 and 2 applicants use the renewal application. The renewal application includes questions that require a narrative response for the following.

1. Describe how your program's participants made progress in achieving stability during the grant award period. For example, describe specific initiatives you have taken to increase household income through employment or benefits, such as use of the Department of Labor's Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program or the SS/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) program. Additionally, describe how any proposed program modifications will impact participants housing stability.

2. Describe how your program targeted and reduced Literal homelessness among very low-income Veteran families occupying permanent housing (Category 2 and 3, described in 38 CFR 62.11). Please include any initiatives you are taking to address shortfalls in the availability of affordable housing in the communities you serve.

3. Describe how you targeted and prevented literal homelessness among those very low-income Veteran families occupying permanent housing who were most at risk (Category 1, described in 38 CFR 62.11(b)(1)). Please describe in detail any Rapid Resolution/diversion services offered and how they are integrated into the screening process employed as part of Coordinated Entry.

4. Describe how you receive and respond to feedback from participants in your program (e.g. exit interviews, internal surveys, etc.). What is your average number of responses to the SSVF Participant Survey? Are you satisfied with

your response rate and, if not, how will you work to increase it? Describe any changes you have made as a result of participant feedback.

5. Specify the average time between client intake and start of service delivery, average time to placement in permanent housing, and average length of stay (enrollment to exit). Describe any programmatic or organizational delays associated with onset of supportive services delivery. Describe the timeline for any proposed program modifications.

6. How have you coordinated SSVF services with other programs offered in the Continuum(s) of Care (CoC) you currently serve? Describe your direct involvement in each CoC's Coordinated Entry effort and community plan to end Veteran homelessness.

7. Please explain whether your program was implemented consistent with your approved budget in your previous year of operation (Oct 1 through Sept 30). Explain any major deviations or variances from original budget. (VA-approved program changes to the grant agreement do not need to be addressed.)

8. Please provide information on whether your program: a) required an extension in order to fully expend its grant award, b) had unspent funds swept by the SSVF program office at the end of any quarter and/or c) returned funds to U.S. Treasury at the end of the grant period. If you have returned funds, explain your plan to fully expend your current grant amount.

9. Describe how your program was implemented in accordance with VA's goals (as described in 38 CFR part 62 and this NOFA) for the SSVF Program. Address how you ensured staff were trained and supervised to deliver services to



rapidly meet participants' individualized needs while protecting the program from waste, fraud, and abuse.

Submission Dates and Times:

Applications for supportive services grants under the SSVF Program must be received by the SSVF Program Office by 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time on February 22, 2019.

Awards made for all grants will fund operations beginning October 1, 2019.

Applications must arrive as a complete package. Materials arriving separately will not be included in the application package for consideration and may result in the application being rejected. Additionally, in the interest of fairness to all competing applicants, this deadline is firm as to date and hour, and VA will treat as ineligible for consideration any application that is received after the deadline. Applicants should take this practice into account and make early submission of their materials to avoid any risk of loss of eligibility brought about by unanticipated delays, computer service outages, or other delivery-related problems.

Funding Restrictions:

Funding will be awarded for supportive services grants under this NOFA depending on funding availability (currently funding is only authorized to be appropriated for the SSVF program through FY 2019). Applicants should fill out separate applications for each supportive services funding request. Funding for Priority 1 or 2 will be awarded under this NOFA to existing grantees for a 1 to 3-year period beginning on October 1, 2019. Funding for Priority 3 will be awarded for a 2-year period beginning on October 1, 2019. Funding for Priority 4 will be awarded for a 1-year period beginning on October 1, 2019.

Funding used for staff education and training cannot exceed 1 percent of the overall program grant award. This limitation does not include the cost to attend VA mandated training. All training costs must be directly related to the provision of services to homeless veterans and their families.

Expenses related to maintaining accreditation are allowable. Grantees are allowed to include expenses for seeking initial accreditation only once in a 5-year period. The expenses to renew full accreditation is allowed and is based on the schedule of the accrediting agency, for instance every 3 years for CARF and every 4 years for COA. Expenses related to the renewal of less than full accreditation are not allowed.

Other Submission Requirements:

1. Existing grantees applying for renewal grants may apply only as renewal applicants using the application designed for renewal grants.
2. Existing grantees applying for new funding under Priority 3 must use the application designed for new grants.
3. At the discretion of VA, multiple grant proposals submitted by the same lead agency may be combined into a single grant award if the proposals provide services to contiguous areas.
4. Additional supportive services grant application requirements are specified in the application package. Submission of an incorrect or incomplete application package will result in the application being rejected during threshold review. The application packages must contain all required forms and certifications. Selections will be made based on criteria described in 38 CFR part 62 and this NOFA. Applicants and grantees

will be notified of any additional information needed to confirm or clarify information provided in the application and the deadline by which to submit such information. Applicants must submit applications electronically. Applications may not be mailed or sent by facsimile (FAX).

#### Application Review Information

##### Criteria:

1. VA will only score applicants that meet the threshold requirements described in 38 CFR 62.21.

2. VA will use the criteria described in 38 CFR 62.22 to score an application (Priority 3 and 4) for a supportive services grant and criteria in 38 CFR 62.24 to score grantees applying for renewal (Priority 1 and 2) of a supportive services grant.:

##### Review and Selection Process:

3. VA will review all supportive services grant applications in response to this NOFA according to the following steps:

a. Score all applications that meet the threshold requirements described in 38 CFR 62.21.

b. Rank those applications who score at least 75 cumulative points and receive at least one point under each of the categories identified for new applicants in 38 CFR 62.22 and renewal applicants in 38 CFR 62.24. The applications will be ranked in order from highest to lowest scores in accordance with 38 CFR 62.23 for new applicants and 38 CFR 62.25 for renewal applicants.

c. Utilize the ranked scores of applications as the primary basis for selection. However, VA will also utilize the following considerations in 38 CFR 62.23(d) to select applicants for funding:

(i) Give preference to applications that provide or coordinate the provision of supportive services for very low-income veteran families transitioning from homelessness to permanent housing. Consistent with this preference, where other funds from community resources are not readily available for temporary financial assistance, Priority 1 and 2 applicants are required to spend no less than 60 percent of all budgeted temporary financial assistance on participants occupying permanent housing as defined in 38 CFR 62.11(b). Priority 3 and 4 applicants are required to spend no less than 70 percent of all budgeted temporary financial assistance on participants occupying permanent housing as defined in 38 CFR 62.11(b). Waivers to this spending requirement may be requested when grantees can demonstrate significant local progress towards eliminating homelessness in the target service area. Waiver requests must include data from authoritative sources such as USICH certification, that a community has ended homelessness as defined by Federal Benchmarks and Criteria or has reached Community Solution's Functional Zero. Waivers for the spending requirement may also be requested for services provided to rural Indian tribal areas and other rural areas where shelter capacity is insufficient to meet local need. Waiver requests must include an endorsement by the impacted CoC explicitly stating that a shift in resources from rapid re-housing to prevention will not result in an increase in homelessness.

(ii) To the extent practicable, ensure that supportive services grants are equitably distributed across geographic regions, including rural communities and tribal lands. This equitable distribution criteria will be used to ensure that SSVF resources are provided to those communities with the highest need as identified by VA's assessment of expected demand and available resources to meet that demand.

(ii) Subject to the considerations noted in paragraph B.3 above, VA will fund the highest-ranked applicants for which funding is available.

#### Award Administration Information:

##### Award Notices:

Although subject to change, the SSVF Program Office expects to announce grant recipients in the fourth quarter of FY 2019 with grant agreements being signed by October 1, 2019. Prior to executing a funding agreement, VA will contact the applicants, make known the amount of proposed funding and verify that the applicant would still like the funding. Once VA verifies that the applicant is still seeking funding, VA will execute an agreement and make payments to the grant recipient in accordance with 38 CFR part 62 and this NOFA.

##### Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

Grantees are expected to offer the following supportive services: housing counseling; assisting participants in understanding leases; securing utilities; making moving arrangements; providing representative payee services concerning rent and utilities when needed; and mediation and outreach to property owners related to locating or retaining housing. Grantees may also assist participants by providing rental assistance, security or utility deposits, moving costs or general housing stability assistance, using other Federal resources, such as ESG, or supportive services grant funds to the extent described in this NOFA and 38 CFR 62.34.

As SSVF grants cannot be used to fund treatment for mental health or substance use disorders, applicants must provide evidence that they can provide access to such services to all program participants through formal and informal agreements with community providers.

### Reporting

VA places great emphasis on the responsibility and accountability of grantees. As described in 38 CFR 62.63 and 62.71, VA has procedures in place to monitor supportive services provided to participants and outcomes associated with the supportive services provided under the SSVF Program. Applicants should be aware of the following:

1. Upon execution of a supportive services grant agreement with VA, grantees will have a VA regional coordinator assigned by the SSVF Program Office who will provide oversight and monitor supportive services provided to participants.
2. Grantees will be required to enter data into a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Web-based software application. This data will consist of information on the participants served and types of supportive services provided by grantees. Grantees must treat the data for activities funded by the SSVF Program separate from that of activities funded by other programs. Grantees will be required to work with their HMIS Administrators to export client-level data for activities funded by the SSVF Program to VA on at least a monthly basis.
3. VA shall complete monitoring evaluations of each grantee at a rate of not less than once every two years. Monitoring will also include the submittal of quarterly and annual financial and performance reports by the grantee. The grantee will be expected

to demonstrate adherence to the grantee's proposed program concept, as described in the grantee's application. All grantees are subject to audits conducted by the VA or its representative.

4. Grantees will be assessed based on their ability to meet critical performance measures. In addition to meeting program requirements defined by the regulations and applicable NOFA(s), grantees will be assessed on their ability to place participants into housing and the housing retention rates of participants served. Higher placement for homeless participants and higher housing retention rates for at-risk participants are expected for very-low income veteran families when compared to extremely low-income veteran families with incomes below 30 percent of the area median income.

5. Organizations receiving renewal awards and that have had ongoing SSVF program operation for at least 1 year (as measured from the start of initial SSVF services until February 22, 2019) may be eligible for a 3-year award. Grantees meeting outcome goals defined by VA and in substantial compliance with their grant agreements (defined by meeting targets and having no outstanding corrective action plans) and who, in addition, receive 3-year accreditation from CARF in Employment and Community Services: Rapid Rehousing and Homeless Prevention standards, a 4-year accreditation from COA accreditation in Housing Stabilization and Community Living Services standards, or a 3 year accreditation in The Joint Commission's Behavioral Health Care: Housing Support Services Standards are eligible for a 3-year grant renewal subject to funding availability. (NOTE: Multi-year awards are contingent on funding availability). If awarded a multiple year renewal, grantees may be eligible for funding increases as defined in NOFAs that correspond to years 2 and 3 of their renewal funding.

Other Information:

VA Goals and Objectives for Funds Awarded Under this NOFA: In accordance with 38 CFR 62.24(c), VA will evaluate an applicant's compliance with VA goals and requirements for the SSVF Program. VA goals and requirements include the provision of supportive services designed to enhance the housing stability and independent living skills of very low-income veteran families occupying permanent housing across geographic regions and program administration in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations, and guidelines. For purposes of this NOFA, VA goals and requirements also include the provision of supportive services designed to rapidly re-house or prevent homelessness among people in the following target populations who also meet all requirements for being part of a very low-income veteran family occupying permanent housing:

1. Veteran families earning less than 30 percent of area median income as most recently published by HUD for programs under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f) (<http://www.huduser.org>).
2. Veterans with at least one dependent family member.
3. Veterans returning from Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, or Operation New Dawn.
4. Veteran families located in a community, as defined by HUD's CoC, or a county not currently served by another SSVF grantee.
5. Veteran families located in a community, as defined by HUD's CoC, where current level of SSVF services is not sufficient to meet demand of Category 2 and 3 (currently homeless) veteran families.



6. Veteran families located in a rural area.

7. Veteran families located on Indian Tribal Property.

B. Payments of Supportive Services Grant Funds: Grantees will receive payments electronically through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Payment Management System. Grantees will have the ability to request payments as frequently as they choose subject to the following limitations:

1. During the first quarter of the grantee's supportive services annualized grant award period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds may not exceed 35 percent of the total supportive services grant award without written approval by VA.

2. By the end of the second quarter of the grantee's supportive services annualized grant award period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds may not exceed 60 percent of the total supportive services grant award without written approval by VA.

3. By the end of the third quarter of the grantee's supportive services annualized grant award period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds may not exceed 80 percent of the total supportive services grant award without written approval by VA.

4. By the end of the fourth quarter of the grantee's supportive services annualized grant award period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds may not exceed 100 percent of the total supportive services grant award.

Recouping Excess Funds:

VA regularly reviews grantee expenditures to ensure that funds are being used in a manner consistent with program goals and regulations. It is expected that grantee expenditures will be consistent across quarters as significant variance, specifically lower than expected spending, may indicate either a lower demand for services or difficulty in managing funds. If during the grant period, VA determines that grantee spending is not meeting the minimum percentage milestones below, VA may elect to recoup projected unused funds and reprogram such funds to provide supportive services in areas with higher need. Reductions will be calculated based on the total amount of payment requests submitted through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Payment Management System by 5:00 p.m. eastern standard time on the last business day of the quarter. Should VA elect to recoup unspent funds, reductions in available grant funds would take place the second business day following the end of the quarter.

1. By the end of the first quarter of the grantee's supportive services annualized grant award period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds is fewer than 15 percent of total supportive services grant award.  
(During this same period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds may not exceed 35 percent of the total supportive services grant award.)
2. By the end of the second quarter of the grantee's supportive services annualized grant award period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds is fewer than 40 percent of total supportive services grant award.  
(During this same period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds may not exceed 60 percent of the total supportive services grant award.)

3. By the end of the third quarter of the grantee's supportive services annualized grant award period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds is fewer than 65 percent of total supportive services grant award.  
(During this same period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds may not exceed 80 percent of the total supportive services grant award).

#### Signing Authority

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, or designee, approved this document and authorized the undersigned to sign and submit the document to the Office of the Federal Register for publication electronically as an official document of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Robert L. Wilkie, Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs, approved this document on December 14, 2018, for publication.

Dated: December 14, 2018.

**Jeffrey M. Martin,**  
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